

# California's Flood Future:

## Recommendations for Managing the State's Flood Risk

### California is at risk. We must take action now.

California's exposure to flood risk presents an unacceptable threat to public safety, to economic stability, and to vital environmental resources. The California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed *California's Flood Future*, a call to action and recommendations for the path forward.

The impacts of a major flood would be devastating to California and to the nation. More than 7 million people and \$580 billion in assets are exposed to the hazards of flooding in the state. In addition to tragic loss of life, flooding in California would have a serious impact on the state's economy and environmental resources.

When California floods, critical infrastructure is damaged, vital services become isolated or are closed, vast areas of agricultural lands become unproductive, and water supplies and water quality are affected.

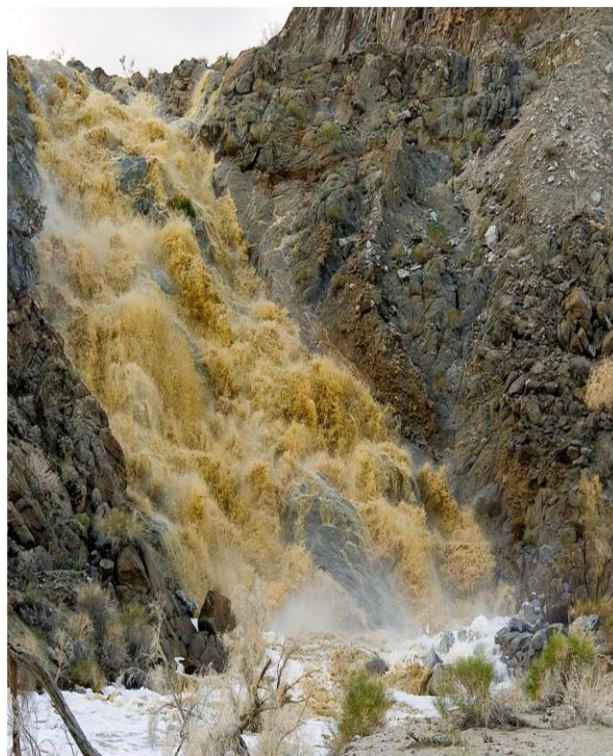
Research used to develop *California's Flood Future* also shows that public understanding of flood risk is inadequate and flood management responsibilities are fragmented and inefficient. Lack of sufficient and stable funding intensifies the state's risk.

### IWM: high value, multiple benefits.

Californians must think holistically to develop a long-term, integrated approach to flood management.

**Integrated Water Management (IWM)** combines flood management, water supply, and ecosystem actions to deliver multiple benefits across a region. The approach uses fewer resources and promotes system flexibility to adapt to changing conditions such as financing capabilities, regional preferences, climate change, and flood or drought events.

Efforts to reduce future flood risk will require unprecedented cooperation among public agencies, landowners, and other stakeholders to improve public safety, ensure reliable water supplies and healthy ecosystems, and foster economic stability.



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## These DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS are being considered for the final Flood Future Report.

Using the IWM approach is not a one-time activity. Long-term commitments and collaboration among public agencies is necessary to create sustainable, affordable water resources systems.

*California's Flood Future* outlines recommendations to achieve a new vision for flood management using an integrated approach.

### 1) Conduct regional flood risk assessments to better understand statewide flood risk.

Identifying flood risk is an important first step toward reducing risk and prioritizing flood management infrastructure needs in California. A consistent method of assessing risk would result in better understanding of risk and a more effective use of funding.

### 2) Increase public and policymaker awareness about flood risks to facilitate informed decisions.

Residents and policymakers have varying levels of understanding about the risks and consequences of flooding. As a result, they could make decisions that lead to putting people and property at increased risk.

### 3) Increase support for flood emergency preparedness, response, and recovery programs to reduce flood impacts.

Flood emergency management is a cost-effective, non-structural tool to reduce flood risk. Flood emergency preparedness, response, and recovery are often fragmented and funds for emergency planning are often reduced during difficult or contracting budget cycles.

### 4) Encourage land use planning practices that reduce the consequences of flooding.

Development in California has increased in areas at risk for flooding.

### 5) Conduct flood management from regional, systemwide, and statewide perspectives to provide multiple benefits.

Flood management projects have historically been developed site-by-site, not considering the complex regulatory, permitting, and water management environment. It is important for flood management agencies and water agencies to develop regional solutions that provide integrated benefits.

### 6) Increase collaboration among public agencies to improve flood management planning, policies, and investments.

More than 1,300 agencies have flood management responsibilities in California. Improved agency alignment will help resolve permitting, planning, and funding problems in each region. Prioritizing and communicating flood management investment needs will help generate support for increased and stable investment in California's flood management systems.

### 7) Establish sufficient and stable funding mechanisms to reduce flood risk.

The backlog of identified flood management projects is primarily due to lack of funding, which puts the state's economy, environmental resources, and millions of people at risk.

## About California's Flood Future:

*The California Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers collaborated to publish California's Flood Future, a report that contains the first comprehensive look at flooding throughout the state, and presents recommendations to improve flood management in California.*

*Research used to develop the report included soliciting information from local, state, and federal agencies throughout California. More than 140 public agencies responsible for flood management provided information used to describe the problem and develop recommended solutions.*

For more information visit: <http://www.water.ca.gov/SFMP>

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